



Department of Defense

DIRECTIVE

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May 2, 1985
NUMBER 4120.15

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SUBJECT: Designating and Naming Military Aerospace Vehicles

- References:
- (a) DoD Directive 4120.15, "Designating and Naming Military Aircraft, Rockets, and Guided Missiles," November 24, 1971 (hereby canceled)
 - (b) DoD Directive 5000.11, "Data Elements and Data Codes Standardization Program," December 7, 1964
 - (c) DoD 5000.12-M, "DoD Manual for Standard Data Elements," October 1984, authorized by DoD Instruction 5000.12, April 27, 1965

A. REISSUANCE AND PURPOSE

This Directive reissues reference (a) and updates policies and responsibilities to promote clarity and consistency throughout the Department of Defense in referencing military aerospace vehicles, and to assign an executive agent to publish a joint regulation governing the designation and naming of these vehicles and a single DoD-wide source document containing approved designators and popular names.

B. APPLICABILITY

This Directive applies to the Office of the Secretary of Defense and its field activities, the Military Departments (including their National Guard and Reserve components), the Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the Unified and Specified Commands, and the Defense Agencies (hereafter referred to collectively as "DoD Components").

C. POLICY

It is DoD policy that:

1. Each military aerospace vehicle shall be assigned a unique mission-design series (MDS) designator. Only approved MDS designators and popular names shall be used in referencing these aerospace vehicles in official documents and public statements.
2. To ensure consistency and uniformity of compliance with this policy, the Department of the Air Force is hereby assigned as the DoD executive agent for this function.

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D. RESPONSIBILITIES

1. The Department of the Air Force, as the executive agent for this function, shall:

a. In coordination with the other Military Departments, publish a joint regulation governing the designating and naming functions for aerospace vehicles.

b. Assign MDS designators to all military aerospace vehicles, coordinate the assignment of popular names to all aerospace vehicles, and publish and update a list of approved MDS designators and names for aerospace vehicles in a single DoD-wide source document.

c. Act as the assigned responsible agent, under DoD Directive 5000.11 (reference (b)) and DoD 5000.12-M (reference (c)), to standardize appropriate data elements for all DoD data systems that require coded identities for aerospace vehicles. Coordinate these activities with the Logistics Data Element Standardization Management Program Office of the Defense Logistics Agency.

2. The Military Departments shall:

a. In coordination with the Department of the Air Force, assign popular names to their military aerospace vehicles consistent with this Directive and the joint regulation noted in paragraph D.1.a., above. To ensure public suitability of popular names, the Department of the Air Force shall obtain the coordination of the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Public Affairs) before public announcement of the selected popular name for each aerospace vehicle.

b. Forward suggested changes to the joint regulation and the DoD-wide source document to the Department of the Air Force to facilitate preparation, coordination, and revision, as appropriate.

3. All DoD Components shall:

a. Disseminate the DoD-wide source document published by the Department of the Air Force as a reference for the names and MDS designators of military aerospace vehicles.

b. Coordinate with the Department of the Air Force, before referencing in official documents and public statements, aerospace vehicles in the planning or predevelopment stage that do not have approved MDS designators or names.

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E. EFFECTIVE DATE AND IMPLEMENTATION

This Directive is effective immediately. The Department of the Air Force shall update the required joint regulation as required and publish the DoD-wide source document annually. Future proposed changes and revisions to these documents should be forwarded to the Secretary of the Air Force.



William H. Taft, IV
Deputy Secretary of Defense

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